

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIRITY 1048
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN
USIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A DAMASCUS 8731

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SY, EG
SUBJECT: SYRIA AND EGYPT ANNOUNCE FORMATION OF UNIFIED POLITICAL
COMMAND

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENTS ASAD AND SADAT HAVE AGREED IN MODERATELY
PHRASED JOINT COMMUNIQUE TO UNIFIED POLITICAL COMMAND.
END SUMMARY.

2. PRES. ASAD COMPLETED FOUR-DAY VISIT TO CAIRO DEC. 21
AND ISSUED STATEMENT WITH PRES. SADAT THAT TWO SIDES
HAD AGREED TO FORM UNIFIED POLITICAL COMMAND.
(FULL TEXT IN FBIS) UPON HIS RETURN TO DAMASCUS FONMIN
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KHADDAM DELIVERED PRESS STATEMENT EVENING DEC. 21 IN WHICH HE
DESCRIBED SYRO-EGYPTIAN UNITY AS "NEW FORMULA FOR
RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, A FORMULA WHICH EXCEEDS
ALL PREVIOUS FORMULAS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES."
KHADDAM CLAIMED NEW FORMULA COMPATIBLE WITH CAR AND ALSO
WITH PREVIOUS MOVES TOWARDS UNITY BETWEEN SYRIA AND JORDAN. KHADDAM

ADMITTED RESIGNATION OF ISRAELI GOVT. COULD AFFECT
CONVENING MEPC, BUT IT WAS PREMATURE
TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER. FONMIN OBSERVED THAT PRES. SADAT
WILL BE VISITING SYRIA BUT HE HAD NO INFORMATION ON
RUMORED ASAD-SADAT-QADDAFI MEETING.

3. AL-BAATH FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL ASSERTED THAT CAIRO
TALKS USEFUL IN PREPARING FOUNDATION FOR EITHER "JUST WAR"
OR "JUST PEACE." EDITORIAL STATED THAT SYRIA AND EGYPT
REJECT PRESENT STATE OF "NO PEACE, NOWAR" IN ARAB-ISRAELI
CONFLICT. SYRO-EGYPTIAN AND SYRO-JORDANIAN UNITY MARK
PROGRESS TOWARD OVERALL UNITY OF CONFRONTATION REGION
AND A MEANS OF TIGHTENING CIRCLE AROUND ISRAEL PRIOR
TO "ADOPTION OF FINAL DECISION ON ONE OF TWO OPTIONS --
JUST PEACE OR JUST WAR."

4. COMMENT:

COMMUNIQUE AMBIGUOUS ON WHETHER ARABS WOULD ATTEND GENEVA IN
SINGLE DELEGATION OR SEPARATELY. FAHMY'S PRESS STATEMENT
DENYING THAT SYRIA AND EGYPT WILL ATTEND AS SINGLE DELEGATION
AND EXPRESSING PREFERENCE FOR SEPARATE DELEGATIONS IS IN APPARENT
CONTRADICTION TO STATEMENT BY PRES. ASAD TO EGYPTIAN
RADIO ON EVE OF HIS VISIT THAT HE PREFERRED UNIFIED DELE-
GATION. COMMUNIQUE STRUCK MODERATE TONE, NOT ONCE
REFERRING TO "ZIONIST ENEMY" OR "IMPERIALISMS". SYRIAN
AND EGYPTIAN POSTURE OF UNITY APPARENTLY ALSO INTENDED FOR
REGIONAL CONSUMPTION; REFERENCE TO RABAT DECISION SUGGESTS
REVIVAL OF FUND-RAISING DRIVE AMONG PENINSULA STATES. WE
CAN PROBABLY EXPECT SERIES OF REPORTS FROM JOINT
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COMMITTEES AIMED AT STRENGTHENING SYRO-EGYPTIAN UNITY.
WHILE THERE IS MUCH IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE OBVIOUSLY UNACCEPTABLE
TO ISRAEL, OUR INITIAL INTERPRETATION IS THAT IT IS A
SERIOUS CALL FOR PURSUING POLITICAL ROUTE AND STATEMENT OF
AN INITIAL BARGAINING POSITION.
MURPHY

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